United Nations A/58/265

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 August 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Item 27 of the provisional agenda*
Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Replies received from Governments	2
	Argentina	2
	Mexico	5
	Sudan	6
III.	Replies received from organizations and bodies of the United Nations system	6
	A. Department for Disarmament Affairs	6
	B. Department of Public Information	8
	C. International Labour Organization	8
	D. International Maritime Organization	11
	E. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	11

* A/58/150.

03-47185 (E) 050903

I. Introduction

1. On 21 November 2001, the General Assembly adopted resolution 56/7, entitled "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic", in which it took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/454 and Add.1) and requested the relevant organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system to render all appropriate assistance that States members of the zone might seek in their joint efforts to implement the declaration of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to keep the implementation of resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986 and subsequent resolutions on the matter under review and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, taking into account, inter alia, the views expressed by Member States.

2. Pursuant to resolution 56/7, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale, dated 28 April 2003, to the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations requesting their views on the implementation of the declaration of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. On 28 April, letters were also dispatched to the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations requesting them to submit their contributions for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General by 30 June 2003.

3. As at 8 August 2003, three Governments had replied and communications had been received from five of the organizations and United Nations bodies addressed. The replies from Governments are contained in section II and those of the organizations and United Nations bodies in section III of the present report. Any further replies received will be incorporated in an addendum to the report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[26 June 2003]

1. The Argentine Republic believes that the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, as the sole interregional mechanism grouping together countries of South America and Africa, provides an appropriate framework for ongoing consultations on issues of mutual interest, enabling them to progress towards the achievement of their objectives as set forth in General Assembly resolution 41/11.

2. While reaffirming the importance of the purpose of the zone as the basis for the development of cooperation among the countries of the region, Argentina also believes that it is necessary to renew and strengthen its content. Argentina firmly continues to believe that the objectives of peace and cooperation for which the zone was established will be attained only when the institutions of representative democracy are fully operative and when respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is attained in the countries of the region. In addition, Argentina believes that the zone represents an appropriate forum for providing those nations which so request with tools for cooperating in the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

3. The Argentine Republic, because it has a special interest in building peace and security and in promoting a cooperative relationship among the States members of the zone, has assumed the role of coordinator of the zone's Standing Committee. In this context, it has proposed a series of actions with the aim of making progress in the various areas of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, adopted at the fifth meeting of States members of the zone, held at Buenos Aires on 21 and 22 October 1998 (see A/53/650, annex). With this in mind, Argentina has pointed out the potential of holding political consultations among the States members of the zone concerning issues of mutual interest addressed by the United Nations. In this context, it is convinced that the zone can be a valuable forum for support and promotion of democracy in the South Atlantic. In accordance with the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, Argentina considers it appropriate to renew its commitment to promoting and strengthening ties between the States members of the zone through intensified exchanges of information from each country, including political, economic, social and cultural aspects.

4. With regard to human rights, it is interested in exchanging information on the national activities and plans scheduled to follow up the Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, adopted in Durban, South Africa, on 7 September 2001.

5. Argentina attributes great importance to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative. To that end, its Minister for Foreign Affairs participated in the United Nations General Assembly high-level plenary meeting on the New Partnership, held in New York on 16 September 2002. The Argentine statement expressed full support for the development strategy of the African Union, in keeping with its policy of giving priority to its bilateral relations with the African continent. It also emphasized Argentina's contributions to Africa in the areas of peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, good governance and technical cooperation for development. Argentina also noted that the zone is an appropriate body for channelling initiatives designed to deepen cooperation among its member countries. In that connection, it stated that it had strengthened its political ties with Africa and was determined to increase them in the medium-term through continued dialogue and bilateral cooperation.

6. With specific regard to cooperation with Africa in peacekeeping operations, Argentina would like to point out that, among other missions on the African continent, it has been participating since 2002 in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) through the provision of three national gendarmerie officers.

7. With regard to strengthening commercial ties in the zone, the Framework Agreement for the Creation of a Free Trade Area between South Africa and MERCOSUR was signed on 15 December 2000 in Florianopolis, Brazil, and in October 2001 the first meeting of the Negotiating Committee of the Framework Agreement was held in Montevideo. During the meeting it was decided to exchange information between the regional bloc and South Africa. In June 2002, the first joint MERCOSUR trade mission to South Africa took place, headed by the Secretary of State for Trade and International Economic Relations of the Argentine Republic, Ambassador Martín Redrado. In the same month, Argentina, as a member country of the regional bloc, took part in the second meeting of the Negotiating Committee of

the Framework Agreement in Brasilia. In December 2002, the third meeting of the Framework Agreement was held in Pretoria.

8. Concerning the prevention of drug abuse and combating drug trafficking and related crimes (see Buenos Aires Plan of Action, paras. 7 and 8), it should be noted that Argentina and the Republic of South Africa signed an agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance to combat the illicit production and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, drug abuse and related topics, which entered into force on 9 May 2000. In this context, Argentina has proposed that the exchange of information among the different States of the zone should be expanded and intensified in areas including: the trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; the reduction of drug demand through prevention and assistance programmes; and the reduction of supply and chemical precursors. In this context, and in view of the next ministerial meeting of States members of the zone, States may achieve intra-zone modalities of cooperation for the purpose of developing common initiatives. Regarding technical assistance to combating drug trafficking through specific programmes for the training of officials, Argentina has an ongoing interest in seeing that the parties evaluate and coordinate proposals for submission to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

9. In connection with paragraph 9 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, and mindful of the adoption of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, Argentina continues to be interested in exploring, together with the countries of the region, the status of implementation of the Programme in order to exchange points of view concerning countries' experiences. In particular, it remains willing to exchange experience on the registering of civilian and military weapons and the legislative situation concerning intermediaries.

10. The Argentine Republic believes that the States members of the zone should coordinate their positions in the framework of the Meeting of States Parties to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as part of the Consultative Process on oceans and the law of the sea established by General Assembly resolutions 54/33 of 24 November 1999 and 57/141 of 12 December 2002. Argentina considers it highly desirable that the States members of the zone should become parties to the conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) concerning the marine environment, the safety of navigation and the safety of life at sea.

11. The States members of the zone are once again urged to continue working to strengthen the legislation governing the maritime transport of radioactive and dangerous wastes, bearing in mind the interests of the coastal States, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the regulations of IMO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

12. The Argentine Republic considers the entry into force, on 24 April 2003, of the Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas, adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on 24 November 1993, to be a contribution to achieving the objective of responsible fisheries. In this context, Argentina welcomes the accession of Ghana, on 12 May 2003, by which it joined Argentina, Benin, Namibia and Uruguay as States members of the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic in ratifying the Agreement, which is designed to

avoid dual registration of vessels. The States of the region have undertaken to cooperate among themselves in the exchange of information on the registry of fishing vessels flying their flags.

13. In the area of cooperation to combat international terrorism, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant resolutions, the States of the zone should become parties to the international instruments on action to combat terrorism and should adopt the necessary measures for their effective implementation, including the establishment in their domestic legislation of penalties applicable to the offences set forth in those instruments. Argentina is a party to nine Conventions and has begun the process of ratifying the remaining instruments.

14. The Argentine Republic considers that the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted in New York on 15 November 2002, and its Additional Protocols, will contribute to the prevention and eradication of transnational organized crime, in particular the trafficking of persons, especially women and children, the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air and the illicit manufacture and trafficking of firearms. For this reason, it believes that the States members of the zone should sign and ratify the above-mentioned instruments. Similarly, the Argentine Republic supports the exchange of experience and knowledge on the subject, in both the areas of capacity-building and training as well as any operative aspects that the States members of the zone may identify as being of mutual interest.

15. It is important to note that the colonial situation of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands persists in the South Atlantic and affects the territorial integrity of the Argentine Republic. Argentina expresses its satisfaction at the level reached in general bilateral relations with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Nevertheless, despite Argentina's efforts in favour of dialogue and a peaceful and definitive solution to the Malvinas Islands question, its commitment to respect the mode of living of the inhabitants of the Islands and the international community's repeated calls for a negotiated solution, it has not been possible to resume negotiations to end the sovereignty dispute. The Argentine Republic considers that resolving this important problem will make it possible permanently to consolidate stability and cooperation in the South Atlantic.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[3 June 2003]

1. The Government of Mexico supports efforts to consolidate the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. Mexico believes that zones of peace also promote disarmament, non-proliferation, the implementation of confidence-building measures, socio-economic development and protection of the environment. Greater cooperation and dialogue among the various zones of peace will help to achieve specific common objectives, such as denuclearization, eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, preservation of seas and oceans and the combating of drug trafficking, illegal fishing and other forms of transnational organized crime.

2. The Government of Mexico considers that, in order to achieve the objectives of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, it is essential that support be provided by the programmes and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, especially the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), as well as by regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the African Union.

Sudan

[Original: English]
[19 May 2003]

The Government of the Republic of the Sudan fully abides by and is committed to the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 41/11 and its subsequent resolutions on this matter. In this regard, the Government of Sudan has taken the following measures: enforcement of existing laws and the promulgation of new regulations in view of consolidating its efforts to combat trafficking in small arms and drugs; exchange of experiences and promotion of cooperation and coordination with neighbouring countries; and active participation in all regional meetings (African region and Arab region) related to combating trafficking in small arms and drugs.

III. Replies received from organizations and bodies of the United Nations system

A. Department for Disarmament Affairs

1. Since the submission of the last report on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic to the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly (A/56/454), several States in the South Atlantic region have signed, acceded to or ratified multilateral disarmament treaties and conventions. Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea became States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Africa. The ratification of the Treaty of Tlatelolco by Cuba, which has also ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, has led to the consolidation of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty has been ratified by Sierra Leone, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Nigeria, Venezuela and Côte d'Ivoire. Cameroon has signed the Treaty. The Mine Ban Convention has been ratified by Angola, Cameroon, Gambia and Suriname, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria have acceded to the convention.

2. On 14 March 2002, a seminar, "Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues: towards the 2005 NPT Review Conference" was organized at Headquarters by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for the Latin America and Caribbean Group.

3. On 29 April 2003, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding setting out the legal framework for cooperation between the Agency and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Parties agreed to facilitate cooperation by developing and implementing programmes, projects and initiatives designed to assist the relevant administrations of States under their respective mandates in relation to the promotion of the strengthening of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to improve the level of cooperation and the exchange of information between them. The Parties also undertook, inter alia, to cooperate in the establishment of databases, training programmes and communication.

4. A meeting to prepare the first "Training the trainers investigative techniques" course was organized in San Jose, Costa Rica, from 2 to 6 June 2003, to improve control over the commercial trade of firearms and ammunition and eradicate their illicit trafficking in the region. The course, organized by the United Nations Regional Centre in cooperation with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the United Nations affiliated University for Peace and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), will train officials from the police, customs, intelligence and armed forces from countries in the region to act as instructors for a series of training courses and will cover issues, including human security, legal instruments, investigation, firearms trafficking routes, weapons destruction, stockpile management, distance learning and other issues related to the legal commerce and illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition (e.g. drugs, terrorism and money-laundering). Two further courses on intelligence and international cooperation will be organized over a period of four years with the objective of training some 800 law enforcement officials in the region. The development of the courses will also be supported by the national police of Costa Rica and Uruguay in their respective capitals.

5. The United Nations Regional Centre also supported the actions of various countries in Latin America in destroying seized firearms and ammunition and improving their stockpile management. In July 2002, 10,000 firearms were destroyed in Rio de Janeiro, and between August and November 2002 a total of 5,004 firearms and 8,263 rounds of ammunition were destroyed in Mendoza, Argentina. In December 2002, 2,573 firearms were destroyed in Lima. These activities were part of the Centre's "2006 Lima Challenge", and were carried out in cooperation with UNDP, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other partners in the region.

6. The Department for Disarmament Affairs, including the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, provided substantive support for, and participated in, the "Seminar for African States on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: the role of safeguards agreements and additional protocols", convened by IAEA from 24 to 27 June 2002 in Johannesburg. The seminar aimed at deepening understanding of the role that comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols play in consolidating and strengthening the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa also organized, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization, a workshop to promote early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty from 13 to 15 November 2002 in Dakar.

7. Within the framework of the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa provided support to the African Conference on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms: Needs and Partnerships, held in Pretoria from 18 to 21 March 2002.

B. Department of Public Information

1. The activities carried out by the United Nations information centres in the region of the South Atlantic included: seminars, panels and press conferences on peace and security (Buenos Aires, Lagos, Lomé, Rio de Janeiro and Yaoundé); seminars, lectures, conferences, interviews and workshops on peacekeeping (Accra, Buenos Aires, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro and Yaoundé); videoconferences, interviews, radio programmes and the broadcast of a film on disarmament (Buenos Aires, Dakar, Lomé, Rio de Janeiro and Windhoek); press releases, interviews, news articles and a television programme on humanitarian assistance (Accra, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro and Yaoundé); radio and television programmes, musical concerts, press conference and book fair on refugees (Dakar, Lagos and Yaoundé); interviews, press conferences and a televised panel discussion on human rights and other observances of Human Rights Day (Accra, Buenos Aires, Dakar, Lagos and Rio de Janeiro); workshops and launching of reports on economic development (Accra, Buenos Aires, Dakar, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro, Yaoundé, and Windhoek); seminars, public service announcements, and a television programme on drugs (Accra, Lagos and Yaoundé); observances of international day of peace, year against racism and decade for peace (Accra, Buenos Aires, Lagos, Lomé and Rio de Janeiro).

2. The 2001 Department's training programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries was held from 10 September to 19 October, with Equatorial Guinea among the countries participating. The 2002 programme was held from 9 September to 18 October, with Cape Verde and Paraguay among the countries participating. Guinea-Bissau has been selected for the next programme, to be held from 8 September to 17 October 2003.

3. Both the 1999 volume of the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, which was published in January 2002, and the 2000 volume, published in November 2002, cited the Secretary-General's reports on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and related reports submitted by States or regional groups. The volumes also reproduced the full texts of General Assembly resolutions 54/35 of 15 November 1999 and 55/49 of 29 November 2000, entitled "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic".

C. International Labour Organization

1. With regard to the countries along Africa's South Atlantic coast that fall within the competence of the ILO subregional office for Central Africa (Angola, Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Sao Tome and Principe), numerous initiatives have been undertaken within the ILO areas of responsibility in partnership with the countries covered. Those efforts contribute directly or indirectly to peace and cooperation among the countries of the region. ILO's efforts do contribute either to conflict prevention or to

consolidation of peace, in keeping with the original mandate of the Organization, which was created in 1919 to promote peace through social justice.

Promotion of basic labour rights

2. In Central Africa, ILO has undertaken a successful campaign for the ratification of conventions relating to: basic labour rights; elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; abolition of child labour, in particular its worst forms; elimination of forced labour; and freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Technical cooperation activities at the national and subregional levels have supported implementation of those conventions, for example:

(a) Three subregional programmes to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (trafficking in children, drafting of children into armed conflicts, exploitation of child labour on plantations);

(b) Two joint programmes to promote the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples (in particular pygmies) and their socio-economic integration;

(c) Subregional consultation and development of a programme to promote the rights and socio-economic integration of migrant workers;

(d) Subregional consultation and national programmes to eliminate job discrimination against persons affected by HIV/AIDS and to include anti-discrimination provisions in the future Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa uniform act on the right to work.

Job creation, social protection and socio-economic integration

3. In the context of the Infocus Programme Crisis Response and Reconstruction, the Employment-Intensive Investment Branch and the Strategies and Tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty Programme on the extension of social protection, ILO has contributed to the development of policies and strategies on job creation, training and the optimalization of employment through national investment programmes as well as to the development and implementation of socio-economic integration programmes for youth, disadvantaged groups, groups affected by conflict and former combatants (adults or children), for example:

(a) Support to Governments for the development, implementation and evaluation of employment and labour policy, in consultation with social partners;

(b) Three subregional seminars on employment and public investment programmes, which led to the development and/or implementation of urban or rural infrastructure programmes (Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Cameroon) which stressed employment (high intensity manpower);

(c) Participation in the development of reintegration programmes for groups affected by conflicts, within the context of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme, in particular in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(d) Implementation of a pilot programme for vulnerable groups and for reintegration of ex-combatants in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(e) Organization of a study and development and implementation of a reintegration programme for children involved in armed conflicts, in particular for Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(f) Support for the development of entrepreneurship (microenterprises and cooperatives) and of microfinance within the context of programmes in Cameroon, Sao Tome and Principe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; specific initiatives to promote entrepreneurship by women (Cameroon and Sao Tome and Principe);

(g) Increasing the awareness of social protection systems aimed at the needs of the majority of the population and support for the creation of mutual benefit societies in the health sector (Cameroon, Angola, Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo), which are still in their early stages but should grow rapidly. Combating HIV/AIDS is also a priority.

Social dialogue

5. In a context such as Central Africa, ILO activities to promote social dialogue and strengthen the capacity of social partners (labour authorities and employers and workers organizations) are strongly oriented towards conflict prevention, resolution of conflict through negotiation, institutionalization of dialogue, the practice of social democracy and partnership, and the promotion of social governance mechanisms based on respect for the principle of representation for social partners.

6. Indeed, in many countries, social partners not only play an important role in the resolution of social conflicts, their experience is often also called upon to settle crises and conflicts at the national and subregional levels. Crises and armed conflicts in any case always have origins and/or consequences which involve social factors.

7. Some examples of the activities of ILO are:

(a) National and subregional level support and training for employers and workers organizations (all countries);

(b) Organization of reviews of labour authorities and training to strengthen capacity, in particular in the area of labour inspection, prevention and settlement of conflicts, organization of tripartite consultations and functioning of tripartite bodies; in this area, ILO often works in collaboration with the African Regional Labour Administration Centre in francophone countries;

(c) Two subregional programmes to promote social dialogue: the ILO/Belgian programme on social dialogue in French-speaking Africa, which is active in the subregion, particularly in Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and the ILO/Portugal programme on social dialogue in Portuguese-speaking countries, including Angola and Sao Tome and Principe; those programmes contribute to the institutionalization of social dialogue and the strengthening of the capacity of social partners for the prevention and settlement of conflicts;

(d) In the next few months, a project aimed at promoting social dialogue for peace and development in southern Africa will also be launched in Angola.

8. Finally, it should be pointed out that ILO also seeks to promote subregional integration and solidarity. In Central Africa, in the context of the programme on

social dialogue in French-speaking Africa, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community has already organized meetings of ministers of labour from the subregion and there is a Central African association of employers, an umbrella group of employers, in the subregion; the Central African Economic and Monetary Community is sponsoring the creation in the near future of a subregional workers organization to serve as a subregional umbrella group for unions. An organized tripartite dialogue will therefore become possible, promoting cooperation and consolidation of social peace and development at the subregional level.

D. International Maritime Organization

The International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes on Board Ships was adopted by a resolution of the Maritime Safety Committee on 27 May 1999. The International Code, a mandatory instrument under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974, entered into force on 1 January 2001 for all contracting Governments party to the Convention.

E. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of resolution 56/7, expressed concern about the increase of drug trafficking and related crimes, including drug abuse, and called upon the international community and the States members of the Zone to promote regional and international cooperation to combat all aspects of the problem of drugs and related offences. In paragraph 7, the Assembly also affirmed the importance of the South Atlantic to global maritime and commercial transactions and its determination to preserve the region for all peaceful purposes. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs is the principal policy-making body within the United Nations system on drug control issues and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice formulates international policies and recommendations in the field of crime control. The Commissions have mandates of relevance to the Declaration on the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provides substantive and administrative support to the work of both Commissions.

1. International drug control

Commission on Narcotic Drugs: Ministerial Segment

2. The forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in Vienna from 8 to 17 April 2003, undertook an assessment of the world drug problem at a ministerial-level meeting, which considered the progress achieved and the difficulties encountered in meeting the goals set out at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, held in 1998. In the Joint Ministerial Statement, ministers and government representatives recognized that the drug problem undermines socio-economic and political stability and sustainable development, including efforts to reduce poverty, and causes violence and crime, including in urban areas. It was recommended, inter alia, that States should strengthen international cooperation among judicial and law enforcement authorities at all levels in order to prevent and combat illicit drug trafficking. States should bear in mind its linkages to terrorism

and other national and transnational criminal activities. They should share best operational practices in order to interdict illicit drug trafficking, including by establishing and strengthening regional mechanisms, providing technical assistance and establishing effective methods or cooperation, particularly in the areas of air, maritime and port control (see sect. E, judicial cooperation).

Combating illicit traffic by sea

3. UNODC supports countries in combating illicit drug traffic by sea by preparing practical guides for competent national authorities on the implementation of article 17 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988. It also updates and publishes on a quarterly basis the directory of competent national authorities under articles 7 and 17 of the 1988 Convention.

Activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Africa

4. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime cooperated with the African Union in organizing the Ministerial Conference on Drug Control in Africa, held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, in May 2002. The resulting plan of action for drug control in Africa covering the period from 2002 to 2006 was subsequently endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The plan defines the responsibilities of member States, regional and international organizations and civil society in implementing priorities. It is based on the principle of integrating and mainstreaming drug control into African development initiatives, including the empowerment of women and poverty alleviation. Furthermore, in August 2002, a programme against drugs and crime was launched for the Southern African Development Community (SADC), representing 11 States. In addition, a seaport control initiative of the Office and the Customs Cooperation Council for East and Southern Africa was extended to include new port control teams in South Africa and Mauritius. The Office also continued to support selected treatment and rehabilitation services, including programmes on HIV/AIDS and drug abuse. For example, in late 2002, a pilot project on local expert networks for demand reduction was expanded to cover North and West Africa to provide the knowledge and skills needed to promote demand reduction activities in those countries.

Activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Latin America

5. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has also supported the drug control efforts of countries in the South American area of the Zone. The Office's programme for Brazil and the South Cone countries was elaborated with the respective Governments, based on agreed priorities. For example, the Office supported activities for the prevention of drug-related HIV/AIDS in Brazil. In the area of urban security, it supported the upgrading of the teaching facilities of the Brazilian National Police Academy. A system for precursor control is also under development. The Office continued to cooperate with the signatories of the Southern Cone Memorandum of Understanding on Regional Drug Control Cooperation, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Uruguay, and with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission/Organization of American States, in carrying out research on drug abuse, based on common standards.

2. International instruments combating transnational organized crime and terrorism

6. In the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, UNODC assists requesting States to ratify and implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three supplementary Protocols: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components, and Ammunition. By ratifying the Convention, States commit themselves to adopting a series of crime control measures, including the criminalization of participation in an organized criminal group, money-laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice; extradition laws; mutual legal assistance; administrative and regulatory controls; law enforcement; victim protection; and crime-prevention measures. The fortieth instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 1 July 2003. In accordance with article 38 of the Convention, it will come into force on 29 September 2003, and the Protocols at a later date.

7. In paragraph 3 of resolution 56/7, the Assembly encouraged all States, in particular the members of the Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic, to cooperate in promoting and strengthening global, regional, subregional and national initiatives to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Protocols will provide an important tool to facilitate the investigation and prosecution of related crimes within the South Atlantic area of the Zone. The Protocol on Firearms, for instance, has been signed by 52 and ratified by four States. In addition, the Protocol on Trafficking in Persons has been signed by 117 and ratified by 28 States. The Protocol on Smuggling of Migrants has been signed by 112 and ratified by 27 States.

8. Furthermore, the Global Programme against Terrorism was launched by the Centre for International Crime Prevention of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which works under the policy guidance of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Global Programme against Terrorism provides requesting Member States with technical assistance to implement the universal conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, in close coordination with the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Office of Legal Affairs and other relevant organizations.

3. Centre for International Crime Prevention of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

9. The Centre for International Crime Prevention has assisted and supported national efforts to combat transnational organized crime by providing pre-ratification and implementation assistance for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. It has also provided States members of the Zone with technical assistance in the fight against transnational organized crime, trafficking in human beings and corruption and in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice.

10. Since the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, the Centre has organized or assisted at: four regional and subregional meetings, in which States members of the Zone

participated to discuss issues relating to ratification and implementation: a ministerial seminar for the Southern African Development Community in Pretoria in 2001; a subregional ministerial seminar for the Economic Community of West African States in Ouagadougou in 2001; a regional ministerial seminar in Ecuador in 2002; and a ministerial conference for the African region in Algiers in 2002. Declarations adopted at the regional meetings strongly encouraged participating countries that had not signed the instruments to do so, and to ratify them if they had already been signed. Pre-ratification assistance has also been undertaken to assist individual countries, including Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria. The Centre has received, and is in various stages of responding to, requests for assistance from several other countries in the Zone.

11. Besides pre-ratification and implementation assistance, a number of other technical cooperation activities at both regional and national levels have been undertaken at the request of States members of the Zone, including Benin, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Togo as well as the Economic Community of West African States. The Centre intends to intensify technical cooperation activities and is ready to provide further assistance, subject to the availability of funds, to meet specific needs of the members of the Zone.